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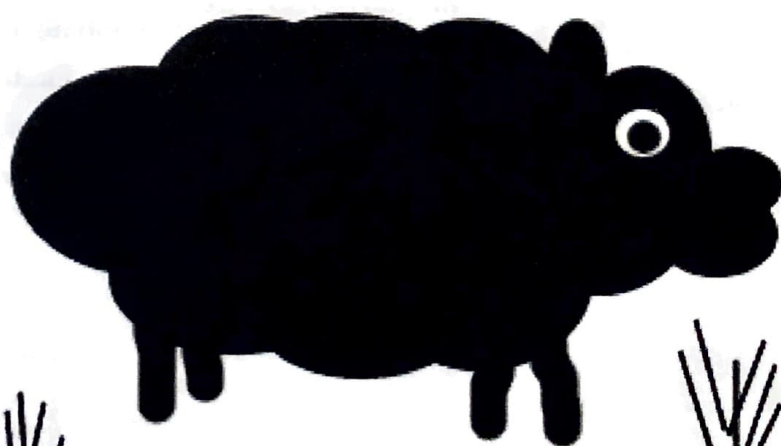


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THE OMEN

STAFF Layout & Editing

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Stephen Morton	Glass Cleaner
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Bera Dana	Pledge

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TO SUBMIT:

Submissions are Saturdays before 8 P.M. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore, or email. Get your submissions to Abby Ohlheiser, Mod 22 Room C, Box 0929, awo03@hampshire.edu.

"Omen is to Climax as NASCAR is to Little League T-ball."
- Peter Gray and Jacob Lefton.
On Clever Analogies

Front Cover:
Athena Currier
Back Cover:
Karl Linder



EDITORIAL

omg here are like, some decrees!! I

[by Abby Ohlheiser]

Now that my job as OMEN editor is a lot less "control-freak determined to do anything and everything to publish bi-weekly" and more "senile Div III student who has outlived her usefulness but still gets to publish her shit on the second page", I have had some time to think about what, exactly, my impending divisional status means. I have produced a list of things I feel entitled to, and will publish them here to save us all from later confusion.

1) My role as OMEN editor will be as such: I shall walk into the OMEN office ½ hour late with ½ a bottle of Jack, take up the only computer while I shit out an editorial, and then sit in the most comfortable chair for a couple hours while I tell Jacob to hurry up and finish the issue because I have places to be. Said places will

most likely involve imbibing what remains of Jack.

2) When something is not going well for me, i.e., I need to speak to somebody in public safety or in central records, saying "I'm Div III" and giving the person a meaningful look will suffice to solve the issue. When I have my Div III pin, I will simply point to it.

3) The second and third year students currently living at HoJo for a month in exchange for a single in a renovated Enfield mod don't deserve it. They should move into my mold-infested, pie-shaped Greenwich mod and I should get the Enfield single.

4) First-year students will share the responsibility of carrying my stacks of books to and from the library. Dropping a personal copy of any

of my books will be punishable by public execution.

5) I get to select three members of the Hampshire Community for permanent exile. I have two in mind.

6) Libby Reinish will buy me a beer every Tuesday evening. Cheap lagers do not count.

7) I don't want a fucking round diploma in sans serif font with a pot leaf seal. Mine will resemble a page from an illuminated Medieval Bible. Ralph Hexter will personally translate my diploma into Latin.

"Hey, I'm Div III too!" you say, "why can't I have a list of decrees as well?"

The answer is twofold: 1) You don't run the OMEN, and 2) My Div III will be deeper than yours.



POLICY

The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion.

Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write (except spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Leadership Center at 6PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The Omen loves you.



THE OFFICIAL OMEN HARK:

Views in the Omen (5)

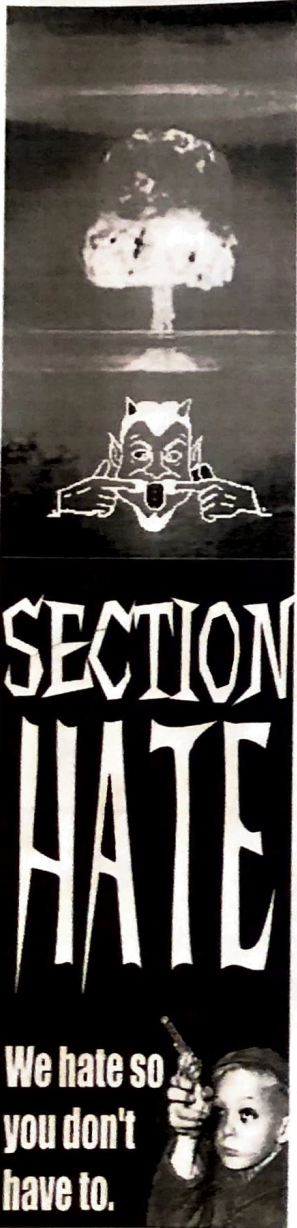
Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)



Volume 27 • Issue 1

September 15th, 2006



An Open Letter to Community Council

Dear Community Council,

I am very disappointed in the 'prizes' given to first-year students who gave their e-mail to the Council's mailing list at the table in SAGA during orientation. As incentive and thanks, council members gave out cigars. This is incredibly irresponsible of Community Council, a group on campus that is supposed to help extol the virtues we live by.

By giving out cigars, Council make several statements:

- That the community supports tobacco use among students,
- That they support the tobacco industry and business practices supported by the industry,
- That there is a 'good ol' boys club,' or in crowd. Cigars are symbolic of political favorites.
- That Council's decision several years ago to stop the campus store from selling cigarettes is meaningless.

I hope that these are statements that Community Council does not stand by. Tobacco use is not only harmful to the self, it is also harmful to others in the community who are exposed to second hand smoke. Hopefully Council would like the community to grow healthier together, not destroy itself slowly. Cigars are symbols of political favoritism, and this is something that doesn't seem to match with the values of Hampshire College. Lastly, Council should take seriously decisions made by previous sessions, lest it destroy any shreds of credibility it may have.

Buying cigars for students with Community Council money and/or giving them out in the name of Community Council is disgraceful. Hopefully Council has enough sense never to embarrass themselves in such a disgusting manner again. **Council should issue a formal apology to the Hampshire community.**

Sincerely,
Jacob Lefton
09/05/06

[by Jacob Lefton]



SECTION SPEAK



"I'm Always Here to Lend an Ego When You Need Me" (Another List of Decrees)

Editor's note: The OMEN gave the subject of Abby's Decree #6 advanced warning of her impending obligation, and the person in question responded by sending us a list of her own decrees. The editor would like to decree that decrees number 6 and 7 on the following list will happen on a cold day in Hell, and that the previous expression means "never" no matter what Dante put in his 9th circle. Number five is doable.

- 1) I want a Flash recorder.
- 2) I want a chute coming from each of the five college libraries into my apartment.
- 3) I want to be exempt from speed bumps because they slow me down

to much and I have shit to do.

- 4) I want Hampshire to buy me a new computer with a professional-quality soundcard and plenty of disk space.
- 5) I decree that Abby Ohlheiser will buy me a beer every Thursday. Cheap lagers also do not count.
- 6) I decree that I am actually the editor of the OMEN. Abby will write editorials and publish them under my name.
- 7) My decrees trump Abby's decrees I don't want to be out-decreed.
- 8) The OMEN will have to hire a paperboy to deliver their publication to my apartment.

[by Libby Reinish]



Yet Another List of Decrees For The Hell of It:

- 0) What part of "We will print everything" don't you understand?
- 1) I've laid out the Omen on my computer for almost three semesters. Hampshire College should finance my purchase of a new computer for the impending divine wrath that the Omen usually brings to hard-drives.
- 2) Abby should share her Jack with me.
- 3) We need monkeys.
- 4) And they get some Jack too.
- 5) ...
- 6) And then I drink some more.
- 7) And the monkeys bang on the keyboard randomly until they punch out this issue of the Omen. They came up with this "O what fools these mortals be" crap but we threw it out and locked them in the room for another week.
- 8) Howard Dean *will* win.
- 9) Strip Jello Twister.
- 10) Publishing the Omen will get you 'some.'

[by Jacob Lefton]



Open Letter #2

[by Jacob Lefton]

Dear President Hexter, Aaron Berman, and Deans,

The School of Circus Arts formally requests recognition as the sixth academic school of Hampshire College. We have assessed the academic programs offered by the other schools and centers and found that no combination of the five schools, Lemelson, and OPRA can truly lead one on a path of inquiry about circus arts.

Circus is both historical and contemporary. Formally originating with the Romans, with roots borrowed

from the Greeks, it is as old as any other discipline. Circus influenced the shape of modern entertainment in ways that scholars are still realizing. It is in many ways the root of modern theater, film, and dance. It is not owned by any one culture, being practiced and influenced by hundreds of groups internationally. No longer will you have to worry about the theater department, because Circus is, in fact, the "Greatest Show On Earth."

Most importantly, circus is a way of approaching and questioning the world that stands well apart from any other discipline at Hampshire. From

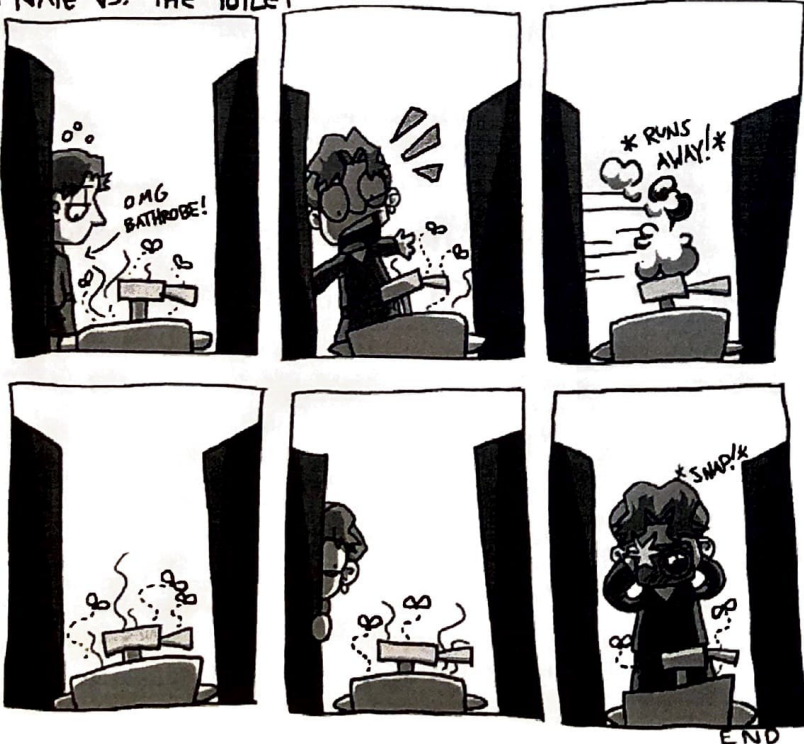
acrobatics to clowning to water-spitting and slapstick, not to mention necessary technical skills, social/cultural knowledge, and pie-making abilities, it is easy to see how Circus Arts require unique methods of inquiry.

For these reasons and more, we feel the School of Circus Arts has a place among the esteemed ranks of the other five schools. All our members have been officially reappointed for the 2006-2007 academic year.

Sincerely,
Hampshire College School of Circus Arts



[by Nate Wooters] NATE VS. THE TOILET

Approaching Dystopia
and Falling On Your Buttoxx

[by Aaron Buchsbaum]

See (the aptly named) Dick.
See, Dick. Damnit Dick, see.
Etc sensory imperatives, Dick.
And tell, Dick. Please narrate your experiences and from there your expectations. No matter utility nor charity towards the readership. For this font, Dick, is thine own.
Suck in your Mozart and Narrate. Never dally.

[Grand and snarky opening line concerning the State Of Things]: Fully a year out of college and only now have I joined a boxing club. The only letter to the editor I've been bothered to write since December never appeared. Anywhere. I'm too lazy to go to Montreal, but not to France. Wait wait wait -Maybe I should say 'It *appears* I'm too lazy ...' because then I'm less culpable in my conception of complacency. Fixing the world while distributing your optimism means you want to buy a lot of candles. Snorting fragrance in Big Box stores means you want to look at the video games instead. As Flansburgh explains, "There's a relentless thread in the text of our songs that's . . . earth-shatteringly dour." Sooth, John, in addition a relentless thread in our *world* that's earth-shattering (ly dour). We are not Mexico. We do not set up parallel governments. . . anymore. I never understood Toni Morrison's 'Beloved' and that "crawling-already?"

baby bull-smut.

[Transitional self-deprecations]
My life is frustrating because I'm lazy.
My life is frustrating because I think I'm lazy (sic).
I feel lazy, because my life is easy and I don't do more (sicXXXhardcore).
Lacking some basic components of un-laziness, I ass around and assess how non-assing would be more beneficent.
Reality is my biggest freaking nuisance.
--Wha? Oh, it's been done? Yea well the death of originality is 'extremely fucking nigh'.
I can't grow large onions.
Damnable sentence banks. Go categorize yourself, you Po-M'oaf.

[Sudden release]
Which is why you should definitely see the film 'Koyaanisqatsi'!
And maybe it's those two food pantries' faults for not returning my fucking call.
Why in the good Christ would I waste more time at the lab for 10\$/hr??
Vermont should be even *more* naked!!!!
Do you KNOW how EXPENSIVE and DIRTY is SCIENCE?
I love my small plentiful onions!
I am determined to use solipsism in a proper sentence. My reward is discovering the word 'soleicism'. Skor?

Tab. Cross. Hook. Overhand. Uppercut. **Chesterfield Cigarette!**

[Coup de grace]
Deeeeeeeeeeeeeaaaaattttt!
So should all decent folk of the earth raise their cups to Aaron Copeland. That red candle gives me the finger, until I blow it. Then it smokes.
Hack philosophy is a pretty good hobby however I should probably finish those damn letters to congress-people.
No more babies until Philip Glass marries Ira Glass.
Life is like an analogy: You can compare it to things.
No one likes being arbitrary and capricious. It's more of an 'either / or' thing.



First-years:

AUDITION
TONIGHT!

Open auditions for carrying Abby's books to and from the library start tonight at 7:30. Please bring a headshot to mod 22. If you do not have the ability to lift 40 pounds bring \$750 in unmarked bills. Auditions are mandatory.

The Beach

[by Aleah Barley]

No matter what people say, life is not a beach.

Every year my family goes to the beach. We pack up our bags, our cars, our children, and our significant others. We double check to make sure we've got the swimsuits and the sunscreen, we triple check to make sure we've got the gin, then we quadruple and quintuple check.

On the road we call back and forth between cars.

"Did you get the gin?"

"Yes."

"How much gin did you get?"

"A half gallon."

"No, that's not enough."

"Well, I can't get anymore. I've passed the last liquor store."

"What are we going to do? There's no way half a gallon of gin is going to last the entire week."

"Don't worry, I'll call Henry."

Hours spent in a crowded car, knees in our chins, driving down a hellish freeway following a long trail of other cars at the pace of a snail, plastic bottles that once held soda and water gathering on the ground. Time seems to stand still as an entire Beatles CD begins and ends before the car passes another mile marker. Your life shuts down and contracts to a single time, a single point.

Then it's over, the world relaxes again. You let out a breath that you didn't even know you were holding, time begins to pass, the journey is over. You've arrived, it's judgment day.

If you're lucky you get there first, you arrive before everyone else.

If you're lucky you get to choose which room is yours from among the many choices, if you're lucky you can get changed into your bathing suit and get to the beach before anyone else, if you're lucky you're the first one in the water and when the other cars pull up they have to ask you. "So, how's the water this year?"

If you're lucky you can toss back your salt slicked hair, look them straight in the eyes, and grin, "It's amazing. The water's warm and the waves are perfect."

At the beach there is a house, it is always the same house if not in its physical aspects or location than at least in its spirit... it's always the same house unless it's not.

One year we went to a house that was all wrong, it was too small for the entire family, some people had to sleep on the porch. Every house has a name, this one was named after my uncle's ex-wife, or at least it had the same name as my uncle's ex-wife printed over and over again all over the house. It was too far from the beach, the water, and the waves. No one enjoyed that year at the beach, and then it ended. A hurricane gathered itself up in the night and washed away our time at the house in a gust of wind and rain.

Most of the time the house is ugly, big, boxy and modern. Most of the time the house looms out of the ground like a giant scar on the earth. Most of the time the house has ten bedrooms and closing on fourteen beds, it can house eighteen people and we can force more than eighteen people in.

Lately the house has had hammocks outside, next to the hot

rub. The house always has an outdoor shower that will go from blinding hot to freezing cold at the slightest provocation and is big enough to fit four people. The house looms in all of our minds when we think of the beach, decorated in tacky prints and wicker furniture, tableware bought by the pound, an ugly, carpeted, sanctuary that makes any house of our dreams seem impossibly wrong.

My family goes to the beach every year, and when we roll away we wave. We promise to call each other, and we do, we promise to love each other, and we do, we promise to meet up some time in the next year, and we do, but most importantly we promise to come back to the beach where we are more than just a random collection of people held together by blood and DNA. At the beach we forget our problems, we wave at cars passing by even though we don't know the occupants, we flirt with strangers in surf shops and fudge shops, we smile, we laugh, and we know that this isn't who we really are. We know that this is who we could be, if we could only capture that feeling and keep it all year long, but life is not a beach.

The *Encarta World English Dictionary* defines the beach as "a strip of sand or pebbles at the point where land meets the sea or a lake." As far as I'm concerned the true definition of a beach isn't a series of words, it's a feeling. The beach is lightness and air, the beach is random people in bathing suits that they really have no business wearing, the beach is envying the group who has frozen margaritas brought to them on a tray and realizing that a bag full of sodas

and beers is just as good in the long run.

It's true though, the sexiest man on the beach besides thinning hair and a definite paunch is the one who'll bring ten women frozen margaritas from their house a block away.

Whenever we see him we shout and cheer, we clap our hands, we ask our men why they aren't more like him. We walk up to him in bookstores, congratulate his wife in the supermarket, and lust after him whenever we're left staring at our empty bottles of water.

There's always one, and one day the sexiest man on the beach will belong to me.

Sleeping arrangements at the beach are always more than a little odd. Most of the time married couples share a room, although sometimes latecomers are stuck in rooms with two twins instead of a double. Children are shuffled like cards and dealt to empty beds, tucked in by parents who won't pay attention to them for a day or two, possibly even a week.

Unmarried people always get the short end of the stick, they'll be stuck in with their brother, step sister, father, son, sometimes even people who are completely unrelated and have never spoken to them without adding a polite "Mister" beforehand. Sometimes feuds begin between people who loved each other days and hours before, feuds based on snoring, laundry, and who has the better bed. Sometimes people have to be separated, but by the following year everything has worked itself out. Children are reshuffled and earplugs are procured.

Food is an important part of the beach.

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the beach.

Few people realize just how important food is at the beach. Not just excellent seafood dinners either, but all the food, the good, the bad, the breakfasts and the lunches. The entire menu evolves around attitudes and desires, not necessarily your own but anyone's who happens to be in the right place at the right time.

Breakfast is a free for all. There are omelets split between plates when the original owner's back is turned, bagels made up by the dozen, and screams of pain and anguish that can only be silenced by thick black coffee. Then there are blueberry muffins.

Blueberry muffins are in a class all their own. Blueberry muffins are procured one single morning, and if enough are procured than they can be reproduced the following morning. Blueberry muffins are a feeling of peace and goodness that can summon the coffee fiends from their beds without a single drop.

Massive trips to the supermarket produce bags full of lunch meats, loaf after loaf of bread, tortillas of every size shape and variety, cheese that can be cut, sliced, stacked, crumbled, grated, and wrapped in anything and everything else. Leftovers from the night before are combined with cheese and salsa, they're then melted into something new altogether. Eyes hungrily follow combination plates around the room as important questions are asked and answered.

"What is that?"

"A wrap."

"How did you make it?"

"Cheddar, muenster, Colby, salami, pastrami, turkey, olives, fresh tomatoes, mango lime salsa, it's an extra large flour tortilla, melted, and then there's more salsa and sour cream."

"Melted in the microwave or the oven?"

"Oven."

"Does it taste good?"

"Yeah, it does."

"Can I have a bite?"

"Sure." A pause as a small corner is cut off from the monstrosity. "Here, just for you."

And then, finally, when the original creator has given up forever on finishing the thing there comes the most important question of all, "Who wants the rest?"

And the answer? Everyone else reaches for their forks to try their luck at some sort of excavation.

People who have never been to the beach ask me if I feel secluded, like a castaway sent ashore with only a dozen crazy relatives to keep me company. The beach is secluded, more so in the time right after you've taken a shower and you have the living room all to yourself. At a time like that you can almost go crazy, there's nothing but silence and calm, a book that someone abandoned years before, a movie that no one has bothered to steal.

Then someone else joins you, and someone after that. A child materializes on your lap and you have to put down the book in favor of food, family, and fun. Cartoons suddenly seem worth watching, brushes are passed around to remove snarls from silky curls. Discussions start off soft and slow only to get louder as everyone decides that they are right.

Suddenly you're sitting there talking about the latest vaccine for a sexually transmitted disease with a man three times your age, a man that you are related to. Reality slides somewhere off to the right and you're caught in the moment. It's not sad though, or silly, it's just the salt water air and things that people feel you need to learn.

You can learn a lot of things at the beach, how to body surf, how

to mix a gin and tonic, how to soothe a tired child and convince people that they should do something that they don't necessarily want to do because it is the right thing to do. You can learn how to follow a grocery list exactly, which is more important than you'd think.

There was a grocery list handed out several years past which will, forever, in my family be known as the grocery list from Hell. The grocery list from Hell had well over a hundred items on it, many of them by name brand. There were five different types of yogurt cups, a dozen different lunch meats and cheeses, sodas, breads, ice creams, and then there were things that even now seem preposterous.

Have you ever gone to a grocery store looking for no-flavor, malt based, cat hair-ball remover?

At the beach you can put anything and everything on a grocery list, but that doesn't necessarily mean you'll get it.

"What do you mean they didn't have unflavored malt-based, hair ball remover?"

"They didn't have it."

"Where did you look?"

"All over the supermarket, they only had tuna flavored."

"You can't buy it at the supermarket, you have to buy it at a vet's office."

"A vet's office? You thought that we were going to a vet's office?"

"It's on the list, unflavored malt-based hair ball remover."

"Sure, but we never said that we were going to a vet's office. Why'd you want it anyway?"

"To loosen the cork on the keg of beer I brought."

"Oh."

"I made it myself."

"Oh."

"Never mind, I'll go get the unflavored malt based hair-ball

remover."

How does it go? 'Sex, drugs, rock and roll; urges, surges, birth control; life's a bitch and then you die; so fuck this world and let's get high?'

Life is a funny thing. You think that you're going one place, you think that you've got a direction, but then there's a side turn and a trip down memory lane. Once upon a time my family went to the beach, and then they went again. Once upon a time a picture was taken of a man and a woman splashing in the waves, then a woman with three children around her feet. After that the picture collection grew and changed, children became teenagers, teenagers became adults, adults had children of their own, and those children grew up.

Once upon a time the photo archive grew, until now boxes upon boxes are stored in desk after desk, room after room. We should be making picture albums to put on bookshelves, to remember our past with... but, we can remember the past without the albums, we can remember the beach with a smile and a nod of acknowledgement.

What's done is done, no picture will bring it back again.

Once upon a time and to the end of time the photo albums will be made, one for each of those three original children. Once upon a time and in the end of time those children's children will have to divide the albums among themselves, photos of memories they have and memories that were long forgotten before they were ever born. Once upon a time and in the end of time those who are children now will have children of their own and take them to the beach with a smile and a wave, with a memory of what was, what could be, and what might have been.

If it wasn't for the beach I wouldn't know my family, they

wouldn't know me. Other times of the year, Thanksgiving, Christmas, holidays, birthdays, they are spent with inlaws, in homes far scattered across the country.

Then comes the beach. The beach where we meet cousins for the first time, the beach where birthday gifts are exchanged months in advance because otherwise they'll never be sent, the beach where momentary weaknesses show up as moral flaws. What is a moral flaw? For that matter, what is a mortal flaw? A marital flaw? Do we end up with our soul mates? Do we have soul mates?

Too deep for me, all I want is a guy who'll bring me to frosty drinks.

Sometimes my cousin brings guys to the beach, some day I want to bring guys to the beach... it's not sex on the beach that we're after, sand in unmentionable places, it's pride and accomplishment. It's companionship during the quiet parts of the day, it's showing off a new found joy to our family, that's what we want.

Dinner is spaghetti and sauce, when we're not eating out, when dinner isn't a bushel of crabs bought twenty minutes earlier from a place that steams them while you wait. Kids sit on porches while adults gather around a table that is too small to hold all of them, no one willing to give up their space, no one willing to go someplace else.

We're all afraid we'll miss something, at the beach and in life. If you go out to dinner first you double check to make sure no crabs will be ordered, if you run to the movies you make triple sure no one's going to be going for ice cream sundaes. Practice makes perfect, some day we'll apply what we've learned at the beach to real life.

Some day we'll rule the world.



Eight Things I Learned Over the Summer

Number one: Immersion German Summer School is a school, and it does take place during the summer but, while mostly german, is definitely not immersion. With half of the students in attendance having no prior german experience, it would be very difficult to fulfill that part. What it amounts to is more akin to Bilingual German-English summer school, which to proportion of english to german determined by how close a teacher is and the skill of the people involved. If a particularly low skill set is present, no amount of teacher proximity can eliminate english speaking altogether. The most they can hope for is silence, but that defeats the point.

Number two: German Universities sound somewhat terrifying. Like a cross between UMass, the SAT, and a twisted perversion of Hampshire, everything is huge and impersonal, but there are few formal expectations, with the addition of A GIANT TEST ON EVERYTHING FROM THE CLASS at the very end. Didn't take good notes to study from? Missed a class? Well, if you'll just make an appointment with your professor's secretary, they'll be able to meet with

you and talk about your problems for ten minutes, in about a week.

Number three: As a result of this, and other issues, such as the need to take a large number of specific, difficult NS courses in order to finish my Div II, I learned that, No, going to Berlin next semester is not the best course of action.

Number four: When painting a house, the hardest part is at the beginning. Scraping paint off the side of a large, Neo-colonial house is not fun. You're never quite sure whether you've scraped enough, or if you should go back and go over that one dubious looking patch. And, oh look, there's another one, further back into an area you've already done that looks like it could use some attention. Once you get to the actual painting part, it's much easier, and mostly a matter of throwing generous amounts of paint onto the wall with the help of a large paintbrush, and then smoothing it out a bit. The only difficulty comes with the *second* coat of paint, where you need to keep good track of where you have painted up to, because, if it dries, the one coat portion and the two coat portion look *exactly the same*.

Number five: That said, the problem with this method is the mess of it all. A set of clothes which are fairly disposable and a similar hat are required for this endeavor, as the paint will drip, spatter, splatter, and just simply spill, much of it finding its way onto your person.

Number six: It's increasingly easy to miss connections with various friends from home, if a concerted effort is not made to meet and hang out. More and More of them are not actually in the area for the duration of the summer, with the influence of internships, foreign trips, or simply no longer actually living in the area at all. Even those that remain available for similar time periods as myself are often fairly busy.

Number seven: That said, trips out of the area to visit more distant friends, new and old, are a fantastic idea.

Number eight: A break was nice, but it's nicer to be back at Hampshire. I've got a tough year ahead of me, but I'm looking forward to it.



Hampshire College: I God: 0

[by Athena Carrier]

God didn't want me to go to Hampshire.

I'm not sure yet whether I believe in God, or even Hampshire, but I like them both as concepts.

Anyhoo.

I flew out from Minnesota with my dad, because my mother spent the summer growing increasingly menopausal and full of rage. Dad's a bit more chillaxed. We don't necessarily get along, but I can depend on him to sit and read a book and let me sit and read my book, and not ask stupid questions about gardening or interior decorating.

There was no question of whether or not I was ready to go to Hampshire, over the last two weeks of summer, I had been all but thrown out of the house. Everything I owned was boxed into suitcases or storage, and a German exchange student named Agi took over my room. I slept on a futon in the home office. My bags were in the basement, so every morning, I'd wake up, run down there and put some clothes on, then run back into my room the office, only to find Agi planted at the computer, frantically instant messaging with her 20-something German boyfriend.

A day or two of this would have been fine. A day or two and I could have been a really good sport about the whole thing. But two weeks of being a Nice American Hostess, eating Especially Friendly family dinners, a car crash that totaled the car, a hailstorm that totaled the roof, and killing my back on that fucking futon... I was ready to leave. No matter what Hampshire held, it had to be better than this. My family cried at the airport, and though I love them dearly, all I could think was, "thank the fucking gods."

I should mention the bags. My mother is cheap (she might say "thrifty"), and she didn't want to ship anything. She got a ten-dollar carpet at some sale,

so she made a giant denim bag for it and stuffed posters and bedding inside too, and then she made another bag for my guitar that looked like a giant fucking diaper bag (this was kindly pointed out to me by an Amherst kid on the Valley Transporter), and she weighed the bags obsessively to ensure that each one came in at just under fifty pounds (the weight limit before you have to pay the airline extra). Those were fun to deal with. There was also the moment where I realized I'd left my bad ass knife in my purse, so I had to dig around for stamps and an envelope so I could mail it to myself from the airport. So it was a nice morning. Lots of fun.

And then there was the plane ride. Good lord. As I mentioned, my mother is cheap, and thus, the airline we were flying was "Air Wisconsin." No one has ever heard of "Air Wisconsin" because no one in their right mind would want to fly "Air Wisconsin." But I did.

We had an emergency landing in Harnsburg, Pennsylvania. Some emergency red light flashed, and the world's perkier flight attendant giggled us into a landing. There was a lovely view of Three Mile Island out the window.

So there we sat. And sat. And eventually got another plane. And then sat. And then a third plane, in which I was seated between two hardcore rockers straight out of the late '80s. They were on their way to a concert, and they admitted to not having showered very recently.

I'm not complaining. Seriously, I maintained my cool completely through all, because I was just so fucking happy to be on my way to Hampshire. I didn't care what I had to go through, just as long as I got there eventually.

The Valley Transporter picked us up around 12:30 that night, and I apologized to the stuffy Amherst boy who had to sit with half of my guitar

bag on his lap because there was no other space for it. I was so tired, and embarrassed, and zombied out that I really wasn't aware of much of anything by the time we got to our motel. Neither was my dad, apparently, because after ten minutes of sitting in the room, he realized he'd forgotten his laptop on the bus.

And twenty minutes after that, I realized I'd also left my laptop on the bus. As I picked up the phone to call the transport service yet again, I was feeling pretty sure that the entire state of Massachusetts hated me. But it was too late to care. I got my laptop back, and I went to sleep, and it was 2:30 in the morning and I hated everyone.

In the morning we looked at the four bags, each weighing just under fifty pounds, and pondered how to get them to campus. There was a bus stop, but there were no buses running. There was one functioning taxi service, but they weren't answering their phone. I bit my tongue and reminded myself that I was in fucking Amherst, and that was close enough. God might hate me, and for whatever reason s/he seemed to be terribly against the idea of my attending Hampshire, but I had made it to Amherst, so fuck you God.

I called Student Services and asked them if they had any ideas. They told me they would think about it and call me back. They did, and they told me that the Dean of Students, R. Michelle Green, would be personally driving over to escort me to campus.

She was very friendly, and very polite about helping move my enormous bags. As we rolled up to Dakin, I felt a wave of relief wash through me: I had made it to Hampshire, but more importantly, I had beaten God.



Experimental Programs in Education and Community

[by Jacob Lefton]

I've been seeing this 'EPEC' thing written on posters around campus and on that blue section of wall by the mail room. It rings a bell, but I haven't really heard much about it. I just have to ask, what is EPEC?

EPEC is a program through which students, staff, alumni, and any other members of the Hampshire community may lead workshops, projects, classes, or any other activities or learning experiences. They are small, flexible, and fun. They add another dimension to the learning experience of Hampshire College. EPEC is a vessel through which things that are recognized as important to education but are not initially evident in the Hampshire system can be realized: interactions between new and veteran students, student-initiated group work, non-scholarly professional skill development, and student projects reaching into the greater community. Individualized education does not need to be, and should not be isolating.

Don't you need a professor to do independent studies?

Yes and no. It's a question of philosophy and practice. Philosophy first:

EPEC was created because there was (and still is) a perceived educational gap at Hampshire. Faculty-led learning experiences are just one of the many ways students learn at college. EPEC is an impetus to and a mechanism through which these learning experiences can be unified and brought before students. Anyone in the community is a resource when it comes to learning.

As many of us know, it can be incredibly difficult and frustrating to secure an

independent study whether or not it's necessary for your concentration. For those of you who will take advantage of what this program offers, EPEC is an opportunity to take full control of your education and learn without the (needlessly bureaucratic, some would argue) prior blessing of a professor.

However, though Hampshire is committed "to testing and evaluating new ideas and new approaches to learning," student-taught courses that officially mean anything are outside our boundaries. If you want an EPEC activity to count toward Divisional work, that's where things get a little complicated. As with most things for Div II and III students, it's between you and your committee. We suggest finding a professor to sponsor the activity (in the spirit of an independent study) if you intend to use it for serious academic credit. If you're Division I, want to be involved in an EPEC activity and want it to count for credit, you'll have to talk to your advisor, be taking a course that's sponsored by a professor who is willing to write Div I evaluations, and there still might be some complications. We're working on it, I promise you!

That sounds great, but what can I actually do?

You can do anything! Generally, EPEC activities are small, flexible, and fun. Some are exploratory, whereas others are oriented around a particular project. Some produce a lot of written work, others produce none. Some are seriously academic, and some are more interested in social aspects of their environment. Most EPEC activities are collaborative and involve projects and interesting discussions and debates. Many times, they include field trips,

guest participants, and open interaction with the Hampshire Community through presentations of some kind or another.

You could be involved in a full blown course, meeting two hours twice a week for an entire semester, culminating in a serious achievement. You could go to a two or three part workshop where someone teaches a skill they learned over the summer just for fun. You could be in a group of students all studying the same thing in the same room at the same time, never really talking to each other, but only because you don't want to study alone.

Wowee! You've actually got me convinced! How do I sign up?

If you want to sign up for an offered activity, contact the person in charge of that particular activity. Their contact information can be found on that aforementioned wall by the post office or in the Office of Student Development (the SDCL, which is attached to the Dakin Living Room).

If you want to facilitate an activity, grab an application from said wall or from the SDCL. Fill it out. If you want funding for some activity, talk to us! If you want to use school facilities, also talk to us, so we can negotiate with the school on your behalf. We'll put the course description up online, on the blue wall, and we will attempt to publish a course guide. You can tell your friends and study buddies.

For more information, send an e-mail to epcc@hampshire.edu, or drop by our office hours in the SDCL from 10AM-12PM, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.



SECTION
LIES

Facts

Merrill B is clothing optional.

Cannibalism is widely accepted in Hampshire society but you must go through the process of an all-community vote of whether or not you can eat your chosen target.

There are some insane people in NoHo and Amherst after they closed down the local asylum. They are usually quite friendly.

Friday night is orgy night in the Dakin gazebo as an homage to Dionysus.

Saturday night is SM night in the Merrill gazebo; people recite Justine by Marquis de Sade before engaging in the most heinous of debaucheries.

There is a massive network of tunnels beneath FPH. It is rumored that Cthulhu lives at the heart of this network, but it is more likely that it is a staging ground for Illuminati medical experiments (their public face is the Masonic temple in Amherst).

Dakin goes H and then J because an evil sorcerer summoned a malevolent

daemon and Dakin I collapsed into another dimension. This caused a rip in space/time so that there is no hole between H-J and the reason why there are clocks in the airport lounge with a different time for each mod and dorm.

Few know that Kurt Cobain actually lived in the woods (illegally) for 3 semesters and during this time was a DJ for Hampshire radio as DJ Polly. This was an inside joke because his favorite munchies food while working there was triscuits with cheddar cheese.

Necrotizing fasciitis can be found in some mods.

Some residents in Merrill A and C use their...parts...as bongos and it is considered to be "wicked cool."

Witchcraft is practiced at midnight at the top of the library stairwell, aka "The Witch's Ladder."

Contrary to popular belief the official Hampshire plant is the Datura and not the Marijuana plant (which is the emblem of our school).

[by Rafferty Underhill Kenney]

I COULD NEVER GET THE
HANG OF THURSDAYS

[A fortnightly column by Douglas Adams*]

Ah, summer holidays. A perfect time to sit back, relax, and wonder why on earth you'd been wishing for the holiday to begin with. Hot, blistering sun, tremendous thunderstorms that knock the electricity out thirty seconds before they announce who's getting voted off of 'So You Think You Can Dance'. And at some point, you reach the point where you've atrophied into a great blob of a person, full of popsicles and barbeque, and you actually start wishing for the year to being properly again so that you can actually have something to do. And then you notice it's Thursday, so you might as well write a column so that when your editor gets back from being on holiday himself, he, for once, won't be leaving threatening messages on your telephone machine or piles of flaming dung in a brown bag by your front door. For once, I'm getting something done not only on time but early. It's uncanny. I'm not sure I recommend it.

But anyway. Summer holiday! I hope everyone is enjoying himself or herself, and that he or she has done a better job keeping active and busy than I have. I have not done any of the stereotypical Summer Activities. I've not gone anywhere exotic (unless you count New Jersey, which perhaps

you should; it's terrifying), I've not seen any great film blockbusters (although I've heard many Americans discussing a film that will be out later this month called 'Snakes on a Plane', which I feel speaks for itself, and I've not managed to eat my own weight in ice cream. Yet.

I have, however, been to the seaside. Every time I go to the seaside I am surprised by a few things that, at this point, should no longer surprise me. First of all, I am always, always, surprised by sand. It gets absolutely everywhere, doesn't it? And there's really nothing anybody can do about it, apart from surrendering to the inevitability of resembling a cutlet.

And then there's the whole problem of walking in the sand. Whenever I go to the seaside, I seem to be the only person who is incapable of walking properly. The other blokes I go with are skipping about with ease, miles ahead of me down the shoreline, while I, plodding along, sink further in with each step. Can one's feet be too large for basic maneuverability in the sand?

I also always seem to forget how salty the ocean is. This is seemingly ridiculous (it's the ocean, who forgets that it's salty?), but when

one doesn't visit the seaside often, one forget the vast amount of salt in the water, salt that always ends up in every orifice of the human body, causing one to splutter unpleasantly. I realize that this makes me seem like a bit of an old fart, but who's to say I'm not, in fact, an old fart?

Hmm. It seems that I've gone off a bit on summer holiday, haven't I? In all honesty, it's not as unpleasant as I've made it out to be. (Well, apart from New Jersey.) The seaside is particularly lovely in the evenings, as the sunset paints the clouds a light shade of pink, and when a cool breeze dances up the coastline. And where would young romantics be without their trademark warm, summer evenings? Summers are golden, and we should all enjoy getting the opportunity to kick back with a gin and tonic and listen to the cicadas and the crickets chirp, without the usual burdens of the year bearing down on us.

And with that said, I'm returning to my usual habit of procrastination.

*The spirit of Douglas Adams is channeled by Rachel Rakov, who is sitting in the middle of August, waiting for a sign that September is almost here.



[by Rachel Rakov]



Zombie Jesus